

[288 cont.]

X 648
[643] 1795, his partisans assembled by invitation near Orenburg, and on September 17 he was elected and proclaimed khan. They then swore on the Koran to live in peace with each other and not to disturb the Russian border.

X 648
681 Ishim's elevation did not diminish his attachment to the power which had given him a new title. After he became khan he did not cease to carry out the wishes of the Russian government as much as possible, against the wishes of his people, and this caused him to have many enemies. In order to avert the dangers which threatened him because of the severity with which he investigated the crimes as well the intrigues of Syrym and his followers, Empress Catherine decided to send him a detachment of troops to guard him and at the same time to help him carry out sentences against the offenders.

X 648
645 It was also decided to establish a divan or council of the khan around him to support him in the administration of the Little Horde. The members of this divan, chosen by the people from among the most distinguished sultans and elders, were to carry out the wishes of the Khan, to help him, to represent him, and to [289] live with him in houses which were ordered to be built for them in the steppes in the territory of Taissugan.

X 648
[669] These plans could not be carried out because Syrym Batyr attacked Ishim in November, 1797 near the fortified post of Krasny Yar [Krasnoiar] and, after causing him to perish cruelly, pillaged all his belongings.

This crime of Syrym's exhausted the patience of the government, but how and where was he to be punished, much less brought into Russia? No doubt it was possible to send troops against him, but the difficulty of looking for him, the maintenance of the troops beyond the borders, the loss of men from hunger and thirst, even the destruction of Syrym's followers still did not assure the success of the pursuit they might undertake. Thus we should not be astonished that this famous brigand evaded punishment for all his attacks against Russia.

[726] However, all the Kazaks who followed his example and pillaged the borders at that time did not remain without punishment.